

Research-Based Lesson Planning and Delivery Guide

Mini-Lesson Planning for Inferences

Benchmark(s)/Standard(s): *What is the next benchmark(s) on my course curriculum guide or FCIM calendar?*

LA.3.1.7.3; LA.4.1.7.3; LA.5.1.7.3

- The student will determine explicit ideas and information in text, including main idea, supporting details, implied message and inferences, and chronological order of events.

Definition

Making inferences involves using personal experience or background knowledge / schema, along with the information from the text, to make assumptions about what is not written. Inferential thinking is often referred to as “reading between and beyond the lines.” Inferring is required when part of the knowledge to understand a passage is found in the text but some is not.

Essential Question(s): *What words signal the reader to go beyond what's written to what is implied in the text? How do readers infer the meaning of unknown words? How do readers determine the main idea when it is inferred? How do readers use text clues to make inferences in an assessment passage? How can inferring and summarizing help readers identify main idea and relevant details? How do readers use prior knowledge to make and confirm predictions?*

Language for Drawing Inferences

Why do you think _____?

How did you know _____?

What probably caused _____?

Can you infer _____?

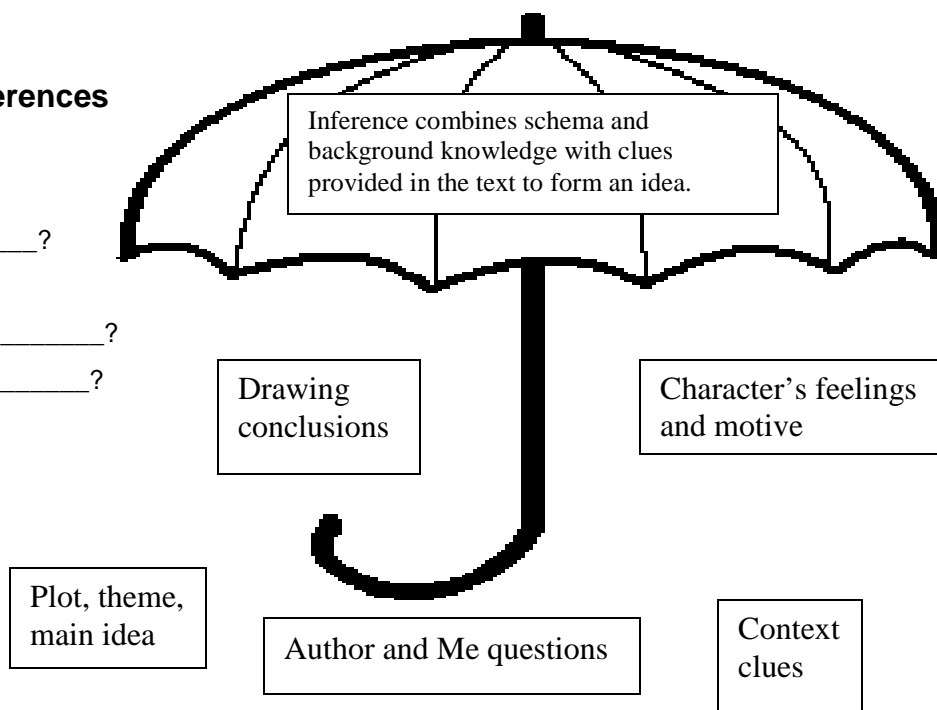
What clues led you to believe _____?

How might _____ feel _____?

I predict _____.

I think that _____.

My guess is _____.



Materials/Resources: *What do I have or need to teach this lesson objective(s)?*

Teacher: Picture book or other text samples, overhead (LCD projector or doc camera), graphic organizer templates (students can draw these on paper)

Student: Paper, pencil

Lesson Agenda: *How will I deliver this lesson to help my students answer the essential question(s)?*

FCIM Mini-Lesson:

Day One: Explicit Instruction (10 min)

Day Two: Modeled Instruction (15 min)

Day Three: Guided Practice (15 min)

Day Four: Independent Practice (10 min)

Day Five: Mini-Assessment (10 min) & Review Student Responses

Special Note: Day One could be Explicit and Modeled Instruction; Days Two and Three could be Guided Practice; Day Four could be Independent Practice. This depends upon your Instructional Focus Calendar.

Suggested Read-Aloud: *Animals Should Definitely Not Wear Clothing* by Judi Barrett

Pre-read the book, *Animals Should Definitely Not Wear Clothing* (or other appropriate piece of text.) Anticipate where background knowledge needs to be built. Highlight places to stop, question, make inferences / predictions or make connections. Identify the author, title, setting, main characters, etc. Activate prior or common knowledge. Take a picture walk. List the important words in the story. During oral reading of this book on Day 2, conduct several teacher think-alouds using the suggested questions listed above.

Special Note: This is a suggested text. Use any story, informational text, literature from *Trophies* or other familiar text that is appropriate for your students. The format for presentation would be similar.

Activating Strategy: Demonstration

Before using text, gather 4-5 related objects. Display the objects for the class. Share your ideas about the person who might own these objects. Explain what clues you use to form your conclusion / guess. This conclusion is made by inferring what you know from personal experience or background knowledge with the objects you have displayed.

Lesson Delivery

Day One: Explicit Instruction: *How will I focus my students on what they need to learn? Which important vocabulary will I introduce/review?*

Signal Words and Phrases

Add the following signal words and phrases to interactive word wall: infer, guess, probably, happened, clues, judging, conclusion, feel, think, believe, referring, describe, reason, determined (source – Learning-Focused Solutions)

Predicting is related to inferring. Readers predict outcomes, events or actions that are confirmed or contradicted by the end of the story. Inferences are often more open-ended and may remain unresolved when the story draws to a close. Readers may need to reread a passage to check for

misunderstanding or for clues that were missed during the first reading.

Explicitly teaching and reinforcing the skill of making inferences positively impacts readers.

- Successful inferring leads to better overall comprehension.
- Successful inferring leads to more engagement with text.
- Successful inferring make sophisticated readers.
- Successful inferring helps students be metacognitive (think about their own thinking).

Strategic Actions for Inferring

Readers:

Understand what is stated but is implied in the text (both print and illustrations)

Make conclusions that are not stated but are based on information found in the text or illustrations

Make judgments about characters, events, theme, and plot that have not been explicitly stated

Think about the deeper meanings of text

Recognize symbolism and use it to interpret the text

Develop theories that explain characters' motives or events

Develop empathy for characters

Use background knowledge and information from the text to form theories about the significance of events

Source: Teaching for Comprehending and Fluency, Fountas and Pinnell

Writers often tell you more than they directly say. They give you hints or clues that help you "read between and beyond the lines." Using these clues to get a deeper meaning of the text is called inferring. If you infer that something has happened, you do not see, hear, feel, smell or taste the actual event. However, from what you know, it makes sense that it has happened. You make inferences every day. Most of the time you do so without thinking about it.

Read the following questions and passages to the class. Explain to the students the clues that you use to form the inference that you make. (There can be more than one possible inference. Often making inferences means choosing the most likely explanation from the facts at hand.) Provide additional examples as needed.

Can you infer where I am?

I hear a loud "thwack" as the ball leaves the ballpark and the crowd roars with cheers!

Answer: _____

Can you infer where I am and what I am doing?

I see bubbles rising. I hear my own breathing. There are fish swimming above me. I feel the seaweed swaying.

Answer: _____

What can you infer from this statement?

Raul always carried his flute with him.

Answer: _____

What can you infer about Denese's mother?

After Denese broke her trophy, her mother turned and walked away without saying anything.

Answer: _____

What can you infer from this expression?

"It's both of us or nothing!"

Answer: _____

Day Two: Modeled Instruction: *How will I show my students what they are expected to do to answer the essential question(s)?*

Activity 1 - Project the following passage for the class. Read the passage to the students. Explain the clues the author included in the passage. Using the clues and your personal background knowledge, model how to make inferences about what has happened and what may happen next.

The young girl is standing on the corner. She is wearing a bright red jacket and bright red snow pants. She has a scarf tied around her face. She is wearing striped mittens. She looks to the left down the street. She stamps her feet. She puts her backpack on the ground. She looks to the left down the street again.

Use the following sentences to model how to form inferences from given details. Provide additional examples as needed.

When I woke up, there were branches and leaves all over the yard.

I forgot to set my alarm clock.

Three students leave the room without permission.

We bought popcorn and some popcorn.

Cheri grabbed her raincoat and her umbrella.

Activity 2 - Graphic organizers can be used to make inferences and prediction about a passage. Select and complete one of the graphic organizers below while you read and do think-alouds. The teacher is modeling without student input.

Read-aloud - *Animals Should Definitely Not Wear Clothing* by Judi Barrett (or other familiar text)

Story Clues + What I Know = Inference

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Making Inferences

It Says... (What the text says)	I Say... (My thoughts)	So... (Inference)

Day Three: Guided Practice: *How will I help my students practice answering the essential question(s)? (How will I incorporate Teacher-Led Question and Answer, Student Accountable Talk, Collaborative Structures, and Checks for Understanding?)*

Practice 1 – Face the Facts

Project the “Face the Facts” cards one at a time. Read the first three fact statements in the first box, and then read the inference questions. Ask students to respond to the questions based on the facts given. Discuss how different answers may be possible as long as they make sense with the facts given. Follow the same steps for the other two cards. Next, give the students a blank copy of the “Face the Facts” card. (More than one can be printed on a sheet.) Direct the students to write three related facts. Then have them write inference or “in-your-head” questions. An “in-your-head” question requires students to use what they know from the story in combination with their own experiences to find the answer. This can also be called “Writer and Me” or “Author and Me” questions.

Use the student generated fact cards as additional practice during the mini-lesson or throughout the month when there is a transition time.

Fact 1: You are at home and it is lunchtime.
Fact 2: You are hungry and want to make a sandwich.
Fact 3: The meat has to be stored in a cold place.

In-your-head questions:
Where would you look to find the meat? Why?

Fact 1: James puts on his bathing suit.
Fact 2: He called his friends to make plans.
Fact 3: He grabbed his towel and left the house.

In-your-head questions:
How do you know where James was going? Why?

Fact 1: Lisa sneezed three times.
Fact 2: Her throat felt scratchy and sore.
Fact 3: She had soccer practice after school.

In-your-head questions:
What do you think Lisa will do after school? Why?

Face the Facts

Directions: Write three related facts and in-your-head questions.

Fact 1: _____

Fact 2: _____

Fact 3: _____

In-your-head questions:

Source: *Reading Comprehension: Tools for Tackling Text*, T. Callella

Practice 2 – Select a wordless picture book, example: *Free Fall* by David Wiesner, *Tuesday* by David Wiesner or *Time Flies* by Eric Rohmann. Read the title and show the illustrations. Then have the students create a short story based on the illustrations and their inference skills. This can be done in small groups or with the whole class depending on the number of books available.

Practice 3 -Cartoons provide examples of the need for readers to infer. Not everyone understands every cartoon. Missing background knowledge can impact a reader's comprehension.

Select cartoons from the newspaper and project them one at a time for the class. Read the cartoon aloud and discuss the inferences that need to be made to perceive the cartoon as funny. Encourage the students to bring in their favorite cartoons and share them with the class.

Day Four: Independent Practice / Processing Activities: *How will my students practice answering the essential question(s) individually?*

Practice 1 – Collect a variety of advertisements. Display the advertisements on chart paper. Have the students read an advertisement and use their inference skills to read between the lines. What does the advertisement want the consumer to believe? How do you know? The students will write a brief summary of the advertisement.

Practice 2 - Using a previously read passage from Harcourt *Trophies*, the students can draw inferences about the main characters. The following questions can help students improve their understanding of character development.

- Decide whether you agree with the character's actions. Write what you would do in the same circumstances.
- Think about the character's problem. Write whether you would react in the same way.
- Think about the character's feelings. Write about the times you have had similar feelings.
- Design a plan of action for the character. Write about the character should do now that the story has ended.

The students will write their response(s) and then share with a partner.

Day Five: Assessment: *How will I know if my students can answer the essential question(s)?*

Extended and Refining Activity: Who Am I?

Play a game of "Who Am I?" using index cards with character names listed on them. Give the students facts about the character and see if they can identify who it is. When they guess the character, the student will earn one point. If the student is then able to make an inference about the identified character, extra points can be awarded. This can be played with the whole class, in small groups or with partners.

Source: *Learning-Focused Reading Comprehension*, C. Brewer and J. Gann